

REMARKS

Amendments

Claims 1-5 and 8 are amended to use language in accordance with conventional US practice. Claim 1 is also amended to provide express antecedent basis for the reducing agent. Claim 2 is also amended to expressly recite cycloalkyl groups in the definition of group A. See, e.g., page 5, lines 26-31. Claims 6-7 are cancelled. Claim 8 is amended to recite a process according to claim 1.

New claims 9-22 are directed to further aspects of the invention and are supported throughout the disclosure. See, e.g., page 5, line 1 – page 6, line 11, and page 6, line 26 – page 7, line 7.

Rejection under 35 USC 112, second paragraph

Claims 1-5 are amended to recite “A process” and to eliminate the phrase “characterized in that”. Claim 1 is amended to provide express antecedent basis for the reducing agent. Claim 8 is amended to use conventional Markush language. Claims 6-7 are cancelled.

Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Rejection under 35 USC 101

This rejection is rendered moot by the cancellation of claims 6-7.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees associated with this response or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 13-3402.

Respectfully submitted,

/Brion P. Heaney/

Brion P. Heaney, Reg. No. 32,542
Attorney for Applicants

MILLEN, WHITE, ZELANO & BRANIGAN, P.C.

Arlington Courthouse Plaza 1

2200 Clarendon Boulevard, Suite 1400

Arlington, VA 22201

Telephone: 703-243-6333

Facsimile: 703-243-6410

Attorney Docket No.: MERCK-3084

Date: September 16, 2008